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PATENT

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of Mark J. Beitz et al.

Art Unit 3761

Serial No. 10/039,238

Filed December 31, 2001

Confirmation No. 7291

For **USABLE SPLICE FOR A STABILIZED ABSORBENT AND METHOD FOR
MAKING THE SPLICE**

May 14, 2003

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
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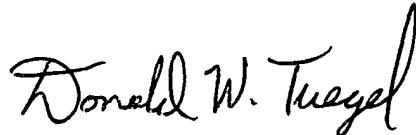
SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.97 and 1.98 and MPEP 609, and in compliance with the duty of disclosure set forth in 37 C.F.R. 1.56, applicants submit copies of the references listed on the attached PTO/SB/08A for consideration by the Patent and Trademark Office in the above-entitled application and to be made of record therein.

This Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted pursuant to 37 CFR 1.97(b) in that Applicants believe that it is being filed prior to the mailing date of a first Office action on the merits. However, if the mailing date of the first Office action in fact precedes the filing of this Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, the undersigned, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.97(c) and (e), states that the information contained in this statement was first cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this statement. Enclosed is a copy of the European Search Report, dated May 7, 2003, in which such references were cited.

Reference 20 is not in the English language. The requirement for a concise explanation of relevance is satisfied by the submission of an English language abstract which is attached to reference 20.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald W. Tuegel, Reg. No. 45,424
SENNIGER, POWERS, LEAVITT & ROEDEL
One Metropolitan Square, 16th Floor
St. Louis, Missouri 63102
(314) 231-5400

DWT/sxm
* Enclosures

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